

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-67. (Canceled).

68. (Currently Amended) A mask system for treating sleep disordered breathing, comprising:

a flexible shell and cushion unit including a cushion portion forming a seal with a patient in use, and including a shell portion, the shell portion including at least one frame-receiving channel defined by a front surface and a rear surface, and an aperture centrally located on the shell portion, the flexible shell and cushion unit being an integral single piece of silicone defining an interior breathing chamber;

a rigid frame including at least one frame edge ~~edges~~ edge shaped to fit into and be secured within the at least one frame-receiving channel with the at least one frame edge engaging the front and rear surfaces of the frame-receiving channel, the frame supporting the shell and cushion unit in use, the frame ~~edges~~ including a plurality of projecting frame ribs received within a portion of the flexible shell and cushion unit, the frame having a first side portion and a second side portion;

a rigid ring-shaped member including a rear end positioned at least partially within the aperture of the shell portion to communicate with the interior of the breathing chamber, the ring-shaped member including an annular front flange, the rear end having an outer circumferential surface that engages with an inner circumferential surface defined by a wall of the aperture;

a rotatable elbow having a first end and a second end, the first end including a groove or recess provided to and engaging with the annular front flange of the ring-shaped member;

a swivel provided to the second end of the rotatable elbow, the swivel including a first end adapted to engage with the elbow, and the swivel having a second end adapted to engage an air delivery conduit;

a plurality of vent holes provided in the shell portion;

four headgear attachment points formed on the frame, a first pair of the four headgear attachment points being provided on the first side portion of the frame, and a second pair of the four headgear attachment points being provided on the second side portion of the frame; and

four-point headgear attached to the four headgear attachment points in use, the four-point headgear including strap end portions being adapted to be threaded through one or more slots associated with the headgear attachment points,

wherein the mask system does not have a forehead support.

69. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 68, the ring-shaped member and the frame being formed from a common material.

70. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 69, wherein the elbow is formed from either polycarbonate or polypropylene.

71. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 70, wherein the ring-shaped member is separate from the frame.

72. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 68, wherein the aperture of the shell portion is provided between the headgear attachment points.

73. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 68, wherein the plurality of vent holes are grouped in an array of vent holes.

74. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 73, wherein the array of vent holes comprises four vent holes.

75. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 68, further comprising reinforcing ribs provided to the shell and cushion unit.

76. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 75, wherein the reinforcing ribs have a greater thickness than adjacent portions of the shell and cushion unit.

77. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 68, wherein the headgear attachment points include upper headgear attachment points and lower headgear attachment points, and the aperture of the shell portion is provided generally between the lower headgear attachment points.

78. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 68, wherein an exterior surface of the shell and cushion unit includes a finish to increase comfort.

79. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 68, wherein the frame and the ring-shaped member have a common rigidity.

80. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 68, wherein the four-point headgear includes four straps including a pair of lower straps and a pair of upper straps, the lower straps being positioned below a patient's ears in use, the upper straps being positioned above the patient's ears in use.

81. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 68, wherein the elbow includes an approximately 90° bend between the first and second ends thereof.

82. (Currently Amended) A mask system for treating sleep disordered breathing, comprising:

a flexible shell and cushion unit including a cushion portion forming a seal with a patient in use, and including a shell portion, the shell portion including at least one frame-receiving channel defined by a front surface and a rear surface, and an aperture centrally located on the shell portion, the flexible shell and cushion unit being an integral single piece of silicone;

a rigid frame including at least one frame edge ~~edges~~ edge shaped to fit into and be secured within the at least one frame-receiving channel with the at least one frame edge engaging the

front and rear surfaces of the frame-receiving channel, the frame supporting the shell and cushion unit in use, the frame ~~edges~~ including a plurality of projecting frame ribs received within a portion of the flexible shell and cushion unit, the frame having a first side portion and a second side portion;

a rigid ring-shaped member positioned at least partially within the aperture of the shell portion to communicate with an interior of the mask system, the ring-shaped member including an annular front flange;

a rotatable elbow having a first end and a second end, the first end including a recess or groove provided to and engaging with the annular front flange of the ring-shaped member;

a swivel provided to the second end of the elbow, the swivel having a first end ~~and~~ adapted to engage with the elbow, and a second end adapted to engage an air delivery conduit; and

a plurality of vent holes provided in the shell portion ~~and cushion unit~~, wherein the mask system does not have a forehead support.

83. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 82, the ring-shaped member and the frame being formed from a common material.

84. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 83, wherein the elbow is formed from either polycarbonate or polypropylene.

85. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 84, wherein the ring-shaped member is separate from the frame.

86. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 82, wherein the plurality of vent holes are grouped in an array of vent holes.

87. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 86, wherein the array of vent holes comprises four vent holes.

88. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 82, further comprising reinforcing ribs provided to the cushion and shell unit.

89. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 88, wherein the reinforcing ribs have a greater thickness than adjacent portions of the shell and cushion unit.

90. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 82, further comprising headgear attachment points provided on the frame.

91. (Previously Presented) The mask system of claim 90, wherein the headgear attachment points include upper headgear attachment points and lower headgear attachment points, and the aperture of the shell portion is provided generally between the lower headgear attachment points.

92. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 91, further comprising headgear having four straps including a pair of lower straps and a pair of upper straps, the lower straps being positioned below a patient's ears in use, the upper straps being positioned above the patient's ears in use.

93. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 82, wherein the frame has a same rigidity as the ring-shaped member.

94. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 82, wherein the elbow includes an approximately 90° bend between the first and second ends thereof.

95. (Currently Amended) A mask system for treating sleep disordered breathing, comprising:

a flexible shell and cushion unit including a cushion portion forming a seal with a patient in use, and including a shell portion, the shell portion including at least one frame-receiving

channel defined by a front surface and a rear surface, and an aperture centrally located on the shell portion;

a rigid frame including frame at least one frame edge ~~edges~~ edge shaped to fit into and be secured within the at least one frame-receiving channel with the at least one frame edge engaging the front and rear surfaces of the frame-receiving channel, the frame supporting the shell and cushion unit in use, the frame having a first side portion and a second side portion;

a rigid ring-shaped member positioned at least partially within the aperture of the shell portion to communicate with the interior of the mask system;

a rotatable elbow having a first end and a second end, the first end engaging with and supported by the ring-shaped member;

a swivel provided to the second end of the rotatable elbow, the swivel including a first end adapted to engage with the elbow, and the swivel having a second end adapted to engage an air delivery conduit;

a plurality of vent holes provided in the shell portion;

headgear attachment points formed on the frame, a first pair of the headgear attachment points being provided on the first side portion of the frame, and a second pair of the headgear attachment points being provided on the second side portion of the frame; and

headgear attached to the headgear attachment points in use, wherein the aperture of the shell portion is provided generally between the headgear attachment points.

96. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 95, the ring-shaped member and the frame being formed from a common material.

97. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 95, wherein the ring-shaped member is separate from the frame.

98. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 95, wherein the plurality of vent holes are grouped in an array of vent holes.

99. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 95, further comprising reinforcing ribs provided to the shell and cushion unit.

100. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 99, wherein the reinforcing ribs have a greater thickness than adjacent portions of the shell and cushion unit.

101. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 95, wherein the mask system does not have a forehead support.

102. (Currently Amended) The mask system according to claim 95, wherein the frame edges ~~include~~ includes projecting frame ribs.

103. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 95, wherein the flexible shell and cushion unit is an integral single piece of silicone.

104. (Previously Presented) The mask system according to claim 95, wherein the headgear attachment points include upper headgear attachment points and lower headgear attachment points, and the aperture of the shell portion is provided generally between the lower headgear attachment points.

105. (New) The mask system of claim 68, wherein the frame and the shell portion are removably attachable to and detachable from each other.

106. (New) The mask system of claim 105, wherein the ring-shaped member and the shell portion are removably attachable to and detachable from each other.

107. (New) The mask system of claim 82, wherein the frame is removably attachable from and attachable to the shell portion.

108. (New) The mask system of claim 107, wherein the ring-shaped member and the shell portion are removably attachable to and detachable from each other.

109. (New) The mask system of claim 95, wherein the frame is removably attachable from and attachable to the shell portion.

110. (New) The mask system of claim 109, wherein the ring-shaped member and the shell portion are removably attachable to and detachable from each other.

111. (New) A mask system for treating sleep disordered breathing, comprising:  
a flexible shell and cushion unit including a cushion portion forming a seal with a patient in use, and including a shell portion, the shell portion including a centrally located aperture, the flexible shell and cushion unit being an integral single piece of silicone defining an interior breathing chamber, the flexible shell and cushion unit including a continuous peripheral flange;

a rigid frame having a shape to generally match a shape of the continuous peripheral flange of the flexible shell and cushion unit, the rigid frame having at least one opening through which at least a portion of the shell portion extends with the frame secured to and positively located relative to the flexible shell and cushion unit such that the frame remains in position adjacent to the continuous peripheral flange;

a rigid ring-shaped member including a rear end positioned at least partially within the aperture of the shell portion to communicate with the interior of the breathing chamber, the rear end having an outer circumferential surface that engages with an inner circumferential surface defined by a wall of the aperture of the shell portion;

a rotatable elbow having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to engage with the ring-shaped member, the elbow having a side located and directed port, the port including a cap adapted to cover and seal the port when not in use, the elbow having a passage wall and a vent wall, the passage wall adapted to direct air flow between the second end and the first end, the vent wall including a plurality of vent orifices adapted to vent exhaled gases out of the elbow, the vent wall being disposed at an angle with respect to an air flow path extending from the first end of the elbow;



a swivel provided to the second end of the rotatable elbow, the swivel including a first end engaged with the elbow, and the swivel having a second end adapted to engage an air delivery conduit;

headgear attachment points formed on the frame, a first pair of the headgear attachment points being provided on the first side portion of the frame, and a second pair of the headgear attachment points being provided on the second side portion of the frame, each of the headgear attachment points including a slot; and

headgear adapted to attach to the slots of the headgear attachment points in use.

112. (New) The mask system of claim 111, wherein the ring-shaped member and the frame are formed from a common material.

113. (New) The mask system of claim 112, wherein the elbow is formed from either polycarbonate or polypropylene.

114. (New) The mask system of claim 113, wherein the aperture of the shell portion is provided between the headgear attachment points.

115. (New) The mask system of claim 114, wherein the headgear attachment points include upper headgear attachment points and lower headgear attachment points, and the aperture of the shell portion is provided generally between the lower headgear attachment points.

116. (New) The mask system of claim 115, wherein the continuous peripheral flange has a thickness that varies.

117. (New) The mask system of claim 116, wherein the thickness of the continuous peripheral flange varies between 1 mm and 5 mm.

118. (New) The mask system of claim 111, wherein the port cap is formed from either polypropylene or silicone.

119. (New) The mask system of claim 111, wherein the angle is approximately 35 degrees.

120. (New) The mask system of claim 111, wherein an exterior surface of the shell and cushion unit includes a finish to increase comfort.

121. (New) The mask system of claim 111, wherein the frame is removably attachable from and attachable to the shell and cushion unit.

122. (New) The mask system of claim 111, wherein the ring-shaped member and the shell portion are removably attachable to and detachable from each other.

123. (New) A mask system for treating sleep disordered breathing, comprising:  
a flexible shell and cushion unit including a cushion portion forming a seal with a patient in use, and including a shell portion, the shell portion including a centrally located aperture, the flexible shell and cushion unit being an integral single piece of silicone defining an interior breathing chamber, the shell and cushion unit including a continuous peripheral flange;

a rigid frame having a shape to generally match a shape of the continuous peripheral flange, the rigid frame having at least one opening through which at least a portion of the shell portion extends with the frame secured to and positively located relative to the flexible shell and cushion unit such that the frame remains in position adjacent to the continuous peripheral flange;

a rigid ring-shaped member including a rear end positioned at least partially within the aperture of the shell portion to communicate with the interior of the breathing chamber, the rear end having an outer circumferential surface that engages with an inner circumferential surface defined by a wall of the aperture of the shell portion; and

a rotatable elbow having a first end and a second end, the first end adapted to engage with the frame, the elbow having a side located and directed port, the port including a cap adapted to cover and seal the port when not in use, the elbow having a passage wall and a vent wall, the passage wall adapted to direct air flow between the second end and the first end, the vent wall

including a plurality of vent orifices adapted to vent exhaled gases out of the elbow, the vent wall being disposed at an angle with respect to an air flow path extending from the first end of the elbow.

124. (New) The mask system of claim 123, wherein the elbow is formed from either polycarbonate or polypropylene.

125. (New) The mask system of claim 123, wherein the port cap is formed from either polypropylene or silicone.

126. (New) The mask system of claim 123, wherein the angle is approximately 35 degrees.

127. (New) The mask system of claim 123, wherein the thickness of the continuous peripheral flange varies between 1 mm and 5 mm.

128. (New) The mask system of claim 123, wherein the frame is removably attachable from and attachable to the shell and cushion unit.

129. (New) The mask system of claim 123, wherein the ring-shaped member and the shell portion are removably attachable to and detachable from each other.

130. (New) A mask system for treating sleep disordered breathing, comprising:  
a flexible shell and cushion unit including a cushion portion forming a seal with a patient in use, and including a shell portion, the shell portion including at least one frame-receiving channel and an aperture centrally located on the shell portion, the flexible shell and cushion unit being an integral single piece of silicone defining an interior breathing chamber, the flexible shell and cushion unit including at least one elongated recess;

a rigid frame including a frame edge shaped to fit into the at least one frame-receiving channel, the frame supporting the shell and cushion unit in use, the frame including projecting

frame ribs adapted to fit into the at least one elongated recess, the frame having a first side portion and a second side portion;

a rigid ring-shaped member including a rear end positioned at least partially within the aperture of the shell portion to communicate with the interior of the breathing chamber, the ring-shaped member including an annular front flange, the rear end having an outer circumferential surface that engages with an inner circumferential surface defined by a wall of the aperture;

a rotatable elbow having a first end and a second end, the first end including a groove or recess provided to and engaging with the annular front flange of the ring-shaped member;

a swivel provided to the second end of the rotatable elbow, the swivel including a first end engaged with the elbow, and the swivel having a second end adapted to engage an air delivery conduit;

a plurality of vent holes provided in the shell portion;

headgear attachment points formed on the frame, a first pair of the headgear attachment points being provided on the first side portion of the frame, and a second pair of the headgear attachment points being provided on the second side portion of the frame; and

headgear attached to the headgear attachment points in use, the headgear including strap end portions being adapted to be threaded through one or more slots associated with the headgear attachment points,

wherein the mask system does not have a forehead support.

131. (New) The mask system of claim 130, the ring-shaped member and the frame being formed from a common material.

132. (New) The mask system of claim 131, wherein the elbow is formed from either polycarbonate or polypropylene.

133. (New) The mask system of claim 132, wherein the ring-shaped member is separate from the frame.

134. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein the aperture of the shell portion is provided between the headgear attachment points.

135. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein the plurality of vent holes are grouped in an array of vent holes.

136. (New) The mask system of claim 135, wherein the array of vent holes comprises four vent holes.

137. (New) The mask system of claim 130, further comprising reinforcing ribs provided to the shell and cushion unit.

138. (New) The mask system of claim 137, wherein the reinforcing ribs have a greater thickness than adjacent portions of the shell and cushion unit.

139. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein the headgear attachment points include upper headgear attachment points and lower headgear attachment points, and the aperture of the shell portion is provided generally between the lower headgear attachment points.

140. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein an exterior surface of the shell and cushion unit includes a finish to increase comfort.

141. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein the frame and the ring-shaped member have a common rigidity.

142. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein the four-point headgear includes four straps including a pair of lower straps and a pair of upper straps, the lower straps being positioned below a patient's ears in use, the upper straps being positioned above the patient's ears in use.

143. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein the elbow includes an approximately 90° bend between the first and second ends thereof.

144. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein the frame is removably attachable from and attachable to the shell portion.

145. (New) The mask system of claim 130, wherein the ring-shaped member and the shell portion are removably attachable to and detachable from each other.